

# LABOUR HOUSING GROUP

## CONSTITUTION



### 1. NAME

1.1. The name of the organisation is the Labour Housing Group (hereinafter referred to as "LHG")

### 2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. To work within the Labour movement both nationally and locally to develop and promote socialist housing policies seeking to ensure that housing of the highest possible standard is available for all members of the community, regardless of their means.
- 2.2. To make available to Labour Party members and to the public generally information on housing issues and to generate discussion of Labour housing policies
- 2.3. To promote housing policies that will assist in securing the objects of the Labour Party as set out in its Constitution.
- 2.4. To seek to influence the development of all Labour Party policies in so much as they have a direct bearing on LHG's housing objectives as set out in 2.1 to 2.3 above.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1. Membership of LHG will be open to:
  - 3.1.1. Individual members of the Labour Party
  - 3.1.2. Constituency Labour Parties, Labour Party Branches, District Labour Parties, Labour Groups on local authorities,
  - 3.1.3. Trade Unions, and branches of Trade Unions affiliated to the TUC, and branches of other organisations affiliated to the Labour Party.
- 3.2. All members must accept the Constitution of LHG and share its Objectives.
- 3.3. All applications for membership shall be submitted to the Membership Secretary, whose contact details will be available on LHG's website. The Membership Secretary will report to the EC on new membership applications received, and request approval for the new member(s) to be entitled to vote and take part in the activities of LHG.
- 3.4. Any individual member of LHG who ceases to be a member of the Labour Party will automatically cease to be a member of LHG.
- 3.5. Any complaint that a member is failing to observe the Constitution of LHG, or that a member does not share the aims and objects of LHG, shall in the first instance be made in writing to the Chair. If satisfied that such a complaint may be justified, the EC shall pass the complaint

to a General Meeting or Annual General Meeting which may resolve to remove the member concerned by a two-thirds majority of those present and eligible to vote.

#### **4. FINANCE**

- 4.1. A record of annual subscriptions from members shall be maintained by the Membership Secretary. The amount of subscriptions for all categories of member shall be determined at each Annual General Meeting. Any member whose subscription is more than 6 months in arrears shall cease to be a member of LHG until all the arrears have been paid.
- 4.2. The Treasurer of the EC shall collect all money due to LHG and shall be the custodian thereof. Any bank account operated by LHG shall be with the Co-operative Bank and all cheques on such bank account shall be signed by officers authorised by the EC. LHG's financial year shall run from the 1st January to the 31st December.
- 4.3. No member or Branch shall incur expense on behalf of LHG of more than £100 without the written authority of the Chair and the Treasurer. However, Branches (see section 9) may raise their own funds and incur expenditure which can be met from such funds. Membership fees collected by Branches must be passed in full immediately to the Treasurer of the EC.
- 4.4. The cost of travel, and other associated costs, incurred by EC members on LHG business, including attendance at EC meetings, conferences, etc., will be reimbursed at the cost of the cheapest available second class rail fare of the journey in question, and the most reasonable price available (hotels, other subsistence, etc.)

#### **5. AUDITORS**

- 5.1. The accounts of LHG shall be audited each year by two auditors elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Treasurer shall produce for inspection by the auditors all documentation necessary for the complete examination of the accounts.

#### **6. GOVERNANCE**

- 6.1. LHG will invite up to 4 patrons to support the EC and help further the Objects of LHG. The EC will recommend named patrons to an AGM, and following approval each patron will be invited to serve for an initial term of 3 years, and for a second term 3 year term subject to approval at an AGM. Patrons will serve for a maximum of 6 years.
- 6.2. The day to day administration of LHG, and responsibility for developing policy for LHG, will be vested in the EC which shall be responsible and accountable to the AGM.

#### **7. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- 7.1. The EC of LHG shall consist of 10 members, elected through a ballot of the membership every 2 years beginning in 2016. The EC will be formed by the 10 candidates for election who secure the highest number of votes in the ballot. The outcome of the election will be reported to the AGM, with a recommendation that the 10 candidates with the highest number of votes form the EC to serve for the next 2 years.

- 7.2. The EC may invite not more than 5 co-optees to join the EC (excluding any co-options under section 7.12 )
- 7.3. Only paid up members of LHG in their individual capacity may be elected to the EC.
- 7.4. The officers of the EC will comprise the Chair, 2 Vice Chairs (1 of who must be a female member), Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Website Administrator, Fundraising Officer, and Events Coordinator. Officers will be elected from within the EC at the first EC meeting following the AGM. The Chair will also hold the position of Deputy Treasurer.
- 7.5. EC officers will report into each EC meeting and to the AGM, on activity within their functional area of responsibility.
- 7.6. In the absence of the Chair, 1 of the 2 Vice Chairs will chair the meeting of the EC, and in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chairs, subject to the EC meeting being quorate (see section 7.7), a Chair will be elected for that meeting by those present.
- 7.7. The EC shall have a quorum of 5 elected members. In the event of a meeting being inquorate urgent matters will be determined by the officers and subject to ratification at the next meeting of the EC.
- 7.8. The EC will meet in person at least 4 times each year (not including the AGM) and by telephone conference or other medium as and when necessary.
- 7.9. Every 2 years, beginning in 2016, at least 8 weeks prior to the AGM, the Secretary will invite nominations from all members for election to the EC. Each nominee will be invited to submit a brief personal statement, which will be distributed to all members with a ballot paper. The Secretary will manage the election process, and report to the AGM on the outcome of the ballot. From time to time the EC will review the balloting process, having regard to the need to ensure that all members are allowed to vote, balanced with the need to be as efficient as possible.
- 7.9.1. The EC will prepare an annual budget, which will be presented to the AGM each year for approval.
- 7.9.2. The EC will submit a report to each AGM outlining its activities during the preceding year, and an Action Plan for the forthcoming year, for discussion and approval.
- 7.9.3. Any vacancies on the EC arising in the course of the year may be filled by co-option at the discretion of the EC.
- 7.9.4. The EC will nominate a delegate to the Annual Party Conference, which will done on a rotational basis between male and female members. LHG will meet all reasonable costs for the delegate attending.

## **8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND OTHER MEETINGS**

8.1. The EC shall call at least one general meeting of all members of LHG each year which shall be an Annual General Meeting which will be held during March. Other general meetings may be called at the discretion of the EC.

At least 8 weeks' notice of an AGM will be given to all members, and will include an outline agenda, and an invitation from all paid members to submit Resolutions for discussion at the AGM.

8.2. All individuals who are paid up members, will be entitled to attend the AGM, and any other general meetings. Organisations who are paid up members may send 1 delegate to each to the AGM or other general meetings.

8.3. Each full member present at the meeting shall be entitled to one vote except the Chair shall have a casting vote in addition to his / her individual vote. Voting delegates shall be Labour Party members.

8.4. The quorum for AGM's and all other general meetings shall be 5% of the paid up membership of LHG.

8.5. The AGM will undertake the following business:

- receive a report on the election of the new EC
- receive a report on activity by the EC during the preceding year
- present a proposed Action Plan for the forthcoming year
- receive an audited statement of the accounts for the previous year
- discuss (and, subject to agreement) approve the
- budget for the forthcoming year
- receive a report from the EC's Annual Conference delegate
- approve membership subscriptions
- discuss any Resolutions submitted from members

8.6. Resolutions for the AGM

8.7. Any paid up member (individual or organisation) may submit a Resolution for discussion at the AGM. Each Resolution should be no more than 200 words in length, and should be concerned with a contemporary topic that is relevant to the objectives of LHG.

8.8. At the time the notice of the AGM is sent to all members (see 8.1 above), paid up members will be invited to submit Resolutions for the AGM.

8.9. All Resolutions will considered by the EC, prior to the AGM each year, at which time the EC may ask the proposer to amend a Resolution, or, where 2 or more Resolutions are similar in content, that the proposers consider submitting a composited Resolution.

- 8.9.1. For a Resolution to be discussed at the AGM, the proposer must be present in person to present the Resolution.
- 8.9.2. At each AGM, and depending on the number of Resolutions that have been received, the Chair reserves the right to determine how much time within the AGM will be devoted to discussing Resolutions.
- 8.9.3. For a motion, other than changes to the Constitution (see section 12. 2) to be carried at an AGM or SGM, there must be a simple majority of votes in favour from those in attendance.

8.10. Other Meetings

Special General Meetings (SGM's) may be called by a simple a majority of the elected members of the EC, or by 25 paid up members of LHG giving notice to the EC in writing of the matter or matters required to be dealt with at the SGM. Where an SGM is to be convened, 8 weeks' notice will be given of the SGM and the matter or matters to be dealt with.

8.11. Labour Party Annual Conference Fringe Meeting

LHG will arrange a fringe meeting at each Annual Conference, details of which will be published in the regular LHG newsletter, on LHG's website and in the Conference programme.

8.12. Away Days (Policy Days)

Each year, LHG will hold at least 1 Away Day (Policy Days) to discuss policy and best practice which will form the basis onward discussions with members of the Shadow Cabinet, Labour Council leaders, etc.

## **9. BRANCHES**

- 9.1. Any local group of not less than 5 full members of LHG may apply to the EC for recognition as a Branch of LHG. The EC will agree the area covered by any Branch, which must always be geographically co-terminus with an existing Labour Party body.
- 9.2. LHG members in Scotland and Wales are entitled to organise themselves as a Branch of LHG, and upon recognition by the EC will be entitled to send one delegate each to the EC, of which they will be a co-opted member.
- 9.3. Branches shall comply with the Constitution of LHG and shall concern themselves only with matters consistent with the Objects of LHG.
- 9.4. Each Branch shall send to the Secretary of the EC a brief written annual report before the AGM of LHG, for distribution at the AGM of LHG.

9.5. The officers of each Branch shall include a Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer, and these and other members of a Branch Committee shall be elected annually by all full members of LHG in the area of the Branch.

9.6. Procedures for the setting up and conduct of Branches shall be determined by the EC.

9.7. Each year, Branches may submit a request to the EC for supplementary funding to support their activities, which are consistent with and will further the Objectives of LHG.

## **10. PUBLICATIONS AND MEDIA**

10.1. All policy documents or other publications proposed for publication by LHG or by Branches shall first be referred to the EC for approval.

10.2. Any statements to the press, or for use via any other media, on behalf of LHG, must be approved in advance by the Chair, or in the Chair's absence by both Vice Chairs.

## **11. AFFILIATION**

11.1. LHG may affiliate to any bodies which are relevant to the activities of LHG, and can assist in promoting its Objects. All affiliations must be approved by the EC.

## **12. CONSTITUTION**

12.1. The EC will review the LHG Constitution from time to time to ensure that it reflects the needs of LHG and best practice.

12.2. Amendments to the Constitution may only be made by a two-thirds majority vote in favour either at an SGM, or at an AGM.

## **13. DISSOLUTION**

13.1. LHG can only be wound up by a resolution to such effect following debate at an SGM of LHG called specifically for the purpose, or by a resolution to an AGM.

13.2. In the event of dissolution of LHG any remaining funds shall be paid by the Treasurer to a registered housing charity or to any other body or organisation sharing the aims and objectives of LHG as shall be approved at the SGM or AGM.